

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 OMB-01 AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 ACDA-19

NEA-11 DRC-01 /184 W

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R 120949Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7657

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CDR USSAG NKP

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LA

SUBJECT: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF LAOS ACCORDS:
CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS LOOMS

REF: VIENTIANE 1078

1. SUMMARY: PHOUN SIPRASEUTH HAS NOT GIVEN LIST OF LPF
CABINET MINISTERS TO PRIME MINISTER. SOUVANNA TOLD DCM
HE FACES PROCEDURAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM IN FORMING
NEW GOVERNMENT IN THAT KING INSISTS CONSTITUTIONAL FORMS
BE RESPECTED WHILE PATHET LAO OBJECTS VIGOROUSLY TO
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVAL OF NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT.
TRANSFER OF POLICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION FOR
VIENTIANE ACCORDING TO NEUTRALIZATION PROCEDURES IS
PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY. LPF PROTESTED SHOOTING INCIDENT AT
ITS COMPOUND AND WARNED ITS TROOPS WILL DEFEND THEMSELVES
NEXT TIME. LOCAL PRESS APPARENTLY STIMULATING CONCERN
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OVER ALLEGED NVA PLANS FOR NEW OFFENSIVE IN LAOS. FRENCH

MILITARY MISSION PLANNING TO INCREASE FROM 89 TO 124
PERSONNEL TO REPLACE "AMERICAN MILITARY ADVISERS" AS THEY
DEPART. END SUMMARY

2. FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS PERTINENT TO SUBJECT OCCURRED
DURING PAST FEW DAYS.

3. PHOUN SIPRASEUTH, BILLED IN PATHET LAO PROPAGANDA AS
"PLENIPOTENTIARY REPRESENTATIVE OF PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG",
PRESENTED NEW LETTER FORM SOUPHANOUVONG TO PRIME MINISTER
ON FEBRUARY 10. ON FEBRUARY 11, PHOUN REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED
FORMATION OF PGNU AND NEUTRALIZATION OF TWIN CAPITALS WITH
SOUVANNA FOR ONE HOUR.

4. DCM DEAN DISCUSSED SCENARIO FOR FORMATION OF NEW
GOVERNMENT DURING CALL ON PRIME MINISTER THIS MORNING.
PRIME MINISTER WAS IN SUBDUED MOOD AND IT WAS APPARENT
THAT PHOUN SIPRASEUTH HAS NOT GIVEN LIST OF LPF
CANDIDATES FOR NEW CABINET POSITIONS. PRIME MINISTER
SAID LPF OBJECTS TO HIS PLAN TO REPEAT 1962 FORMULA IN
ESTABLISHING NEW GOVERNMENT. HE ASSERTED THAT THIS
PROCEDURE WOULD ONLY INVOLVE "NOTIFYING" NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
NOT SEEKING VOTE OF APPROVAL, AFTER WHICH OLD GOVERNMENT
WOULD RESIGN. PRIME MINISTER WOULD THEN GO TO LUANG
PRABANG AND "MAKE DECLARATION" OF NEW GOVERNMENT BEFORE
KING, THEREBY SECURING HIS APPROVAL. PRIME MINISTER SAID
KING INSISTS THAT CONSTITUTIONAL FORMS BE RESPECTED, BUT
HE HOPES TO RESOLVE QUESTION BEFORE FEBRUARY 21, SO THAT
HE CAN NAME THE GOVERNMENT ON THAT DATE. INVESTITURE
WILL UNQUESTIONABLY TAKE MORE TIME. (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH
PRIME MINISTER MAINTAINS THAT 1962 PROCEDURE ONLY INVOLVED
"NOTIFICATION," OUR HISTORY BOOKS TELL US THAT AFTER
COALITION GOVERNMENT OF THAT ERA WAS ESTABLISHED, PRIME
MINISTER DID SECURE UNANIMOUS VOTE OF SPECIAL POWERS FROM
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. LPF BITTERLY PROTESTED SOUVANNA'S
ACTION AND MUST FEAR THAT SOUVANNA MAY BE PRESSURED BY
CONSERVATIVES INTO USING SIMILAR PROCEDURE NOW TO MEET
KING'S DESIRES.)

5. ON FEBRUARY 9, JCCIA HELD CEREMONY WITH VIENTIANE CITY
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ADMINISTRATIVE CHIEFS AND JOINT POLICE FORCE COMMANDERS
TO CONFER "RIGHT AND AUTHORITY" ON THEM TO IMPLEMENT
VARIOUS AGREEMENTS FOR NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE.
IMPLICATION OF CEREMONY WAS THAT PATHET LAO ACCEPTS
NEUTRAL, DEMOCRATIC, PEACE-LOVING PERSONALITIES" WITHIN
MEANING OF ARTICLE 10 OF PROTOCOL. ON FEBRUARY 11,
PREFECT, DISTRICT CHIEFS OF VIENTIANE AND PERSONNEL
FROM JOINT POLICE FORCES HELD LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS OF

PROCEDURES FOR NEUTRALIZATION OF VIENTIANE. NATIONAL POLICE DEPUTY DIRECTOR VATTHA INDICATED VIENTIANE URBAN POLICE WILL CONTINUE TO OBSERVE THEIR NORMAL DUTIES UNTIL FUNCTIONS CAN BE TURNED OVER TO JOINT POLICE FORCES IN ORDERLY MANNER.

6. RADIO PATHET LAO BROADCAST ON FEBRUARY 9 "PROTEST NOTE" FROM LPF DELEGATION CHIEF SOTH PHETRASY TO RLG DELEGATION CONCERNING SHOOTING INCIDENT AT LPF COMPOUND FEBRUARY 8. SOTH DID NOT INDICATE LPF CONSIDERED INCIDENT AS HAVING BEEN MASTERMINDED BY "ULTRA-REACTIONARY VIENTIANE ELEMENTS" BUT DID WARN THAT IF SIMILAR INCIDENT OCCURRED LPF "WILL HAVE TO USE ITS OWN NECESSARY MEASURES TO DEFEND ITSELF."

7. IN PAST FEW DAYS, LOCAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN ATTEMPTING TO PROMOTE CONCERN OVER ALLEGED NVA PLANS TO MOUNT NEW OFFENSIVE IN LAOS. QUOTING "AUTHORIZED MILITARY SOURCES," LOCAL PRESS HAS ASSERTED THAT DRV DEFENSE MINISTER HAS ISSUED "SECRET ORDER" FOR RENEWED ATTACKS IN LAOS. NVA TROOPS HAVE SUPPOSEDLY BEEN PLACED ON "FULL ALERT" AND ISSUED AMMUNITION AND SUPPLIES, AWAITING "D-DAY." (COMMENT: DURING PAST WEEK, ENEMY RECAPTURED SMALL TOWN OF HIN BOUN NORTH OF THAKHEK, CAUSING INCREASE IN CASUALTIES. BUT, WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM NEWSPAPERS' ALLEGATIONS.)

8. FRENCH SOURCES TOLD PRESS THAT PERSONNEL COMPLEMENT OF FRENCH MILITARY MISSION WILL BE INCREASED FROM 89 TO 124 IN NEXT FEW MONTHS TO BEEF UP "CORPS OF INSTRUCTORS FOR LAO TROOPS AS AMERICAN MILITARY ADVISERS PROGRESSIVELY DEPART."

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

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To: STATE
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